

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

their old regime? Material betterment had given birth to the Anmmite bourgeoisie, who were a peculiarly destructive product. The increase in crime and violence, the dissolution of the family and commune, were of ominous significance* Not that anything could be done to prevent this progressive decline, and these idle reflections were a form of "spilt-milk" thinking, but the thoughtful Frenchman could not help questioning the value of what he had offered to replace what he had thoughtlessly destroyed.

It was an undeniably healthy sign provided that it prefaced a re-modelling of colonial psychology, but there was a fatal and simultaneous tendency to brand all effort as futile. Were not the differences between peoples too profound to be bridged, and Occidental philanthropy at best an impertinent blunder? This form of fatalism, so foreign to the West, was but one of the profound effects Oriental dunking was having on the conqueror.

The Effect upon Colonials of Indo-China and its Peoples

Not only does the colony transform Europeans physiologically, but there is a spiritual metamorphosis as well. Orientalists are only a small group consciously studying native culture, whereas the vast majority of colonials are unaware of the effect native life has upon them. But it is none the less real because they deny it or are even unaware of the change it has brought about in themselves.

By contrast with those whose activities are stimulated by colonial life there are some Frenchmen who become impregnated with Eastern philosophy. The Buddhist ideal which eliminates regret and desire, the anonymity of Asiatic life, the belief that the perfect formulae of Hying have long ago been discovered and comfortably embodied in its static society, are especially attractive to Occidentals

whose natural
 zest for action has been exhausted by a personal
 cataclysm or the World
 War. The Oriental absorption in the moment, relegating
 the past to obli-
 vion future to care for itself, its smiling and
 graceful resignation
 to fate, is seductive to Occidentals given to
 melancholic musing. The
 Asiatic for others is also agreeably contagious.
 One of the
 for the joyous acaltation felt by a European in the
 East is that
 he hap delivered from the burden of
 compassion. Abstention from
 the suffering of otters accounts for the callousness
 which charao
 colonials. The atrophy of the will and sensibilities Is
 by a form, **of** mom!
 The. of Occidental oBdtions Is chameleon to-
 Its Oriental